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COMIC SHOP NEWS



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G.I. COMBAT

The war goes on at DC!

When the publisher announced the end of *Men of War* after the series' eighth issue, fans of war comics were understandably concerned—but the replacement series, *G.I. Combat*, offers a double helping of war adventure with the launch of "The War That Time Forgot" and "The Unknown Soldier."

The original "War That Time Forgot" dates back to the early days of the Silver Age, when Robert Kanigher, Ross Andru, & Mike Esposito launched the series in *Star Spangled War Stories*. The book's distinctive blend of "tanks and dinosaurs," as many described it, differentiated it from the rest of DC's more realistic war titles. While the time and place of the relaunched "War That Time Forgot," the elements that originally defined it are still integral to the series. "The whole premise of the book is soldiers fighting dinosaurs," writer J.T. Krul said. "It's such a fun concept—why mess with a good thing?"

"The foundations of the original series are definitely being upheld in terms of the world and the overall dynamic. We've moved the story into present day, using soldiers and weaponry found in today's world, but other than that, not much has changed."

"Perhaps the one angle that is different comes from the fact that we're trying to focus more on the soldiers being trapped in this dangerous realm. In the original stories, it often featured soldiers dropping into the 'hot zone,' so to speak, in each adventure. There was this sense of a constant military presence on the fringe of the dinosaur realm. For us, we wanted to keep our focus on soldiers trapped in this area—with no connection to what is or is not happening in the rest of the world. That isolation was key for us. This ultimately a tale of survival, pure and simple... Well, maybe not so simple..."

DC's first New 52 war book, *Men of War*, turned out to have a

superheroic angle, complete with subtle links to the bi New 52 picture. Should readers expect similar elements to appear in "War That Time Forgot"? "No—in doing a book like 'The War That Time Forgot,' I felt it was important to keep it separate from the rest of the DCU," Krul said. "The whole concept of having soldiers confronted by dinosaurs needed to be utterly mind-blowing for them. Were this discovery made in a world where the soldiers are aware of superheroes and aliens from other worlds, the impact would be



Krul, Palmiotti, & Gray—GI Specialists

somehow diminished. Don't get me wrong—I think it would still rock their senses, but that reaction would be tempered by all the other amazing things they've witnessed in a world like the DCU. Who knows... maybe they'd just wait for Superman to show up!"

Who are the protagonists of the series, and how did they end up in the land of dinosaurs—or is that a question that they're trying to answer as the series progresses? "The story opens as a team of soldiers is heading into a region of North Korea, and we focus primarily on two buddies, Stevens and Elliott. The military has discovered a blind spot in their satellite coverage of the foreign power and want some clarification to what's going on—whether it's an electrical disturbance or perhaps some new cloaking technology. Essentially, they enter the fray and everything goes to hell quickly."

"At its heart, 'The War That Time Forgot' is about Stevens and Elliott trying to get out of the most hostile environment they've ever imagined. They care less about explanations than they do about saving their butts."

Apparently even dinosaurs need a little downtime: the series is not a permanent feature in *G.I. Combat*. "The first story is four issues," Krul said. "We're working on more, but there will be a break in the schedule as DC inserts other war-related properties into the book. I think it's a great idea make this book something of a war-anthology title that can offer very different types of stories on a monthly basis. I mean, just look at the first stuff coming out. Jimmy and Justin's 'Unknown Soldier' is a great book, and yet is very different than what we are doing with 'The War That Time Forgot.' Hopefully, the book as a whole will be offering something for everybody."

The second feature in *G.I. Combat* is Justin Gray & Jimmy Palmiotti's "Unknown Soldier," a revamped take on the war hero whose earned a solo series starting in 1970 (and it, too, appeared in *Star Spangled War Stories*). Just who is the new Unknown Soldier, and what drives him? "We're taking a dual approach to this character," Justin Gray said. "On the surface, this is a modern war book/espionage series. Underneath that, however, it is a study of combat trauma, loss and the psychological toll of terrorism."

"Remembering that this is set in the world of comics, we bend reality in some places, but the Unknown Soldier's heart is driven by a need to make sure what happened to his family doesn't happen to anyone else's. Tragedy propels him into a very dangerous world as he grapples with his sanity."

"The drive of the character is a simple one that we can all understand," Jimmy Palmiotti said. "He has lost what's most dear to him, and now he's trying to fill the void left behind."

Readers shouldn't expect to find any links to the WWII incarnation of the hero in this series. "We're going with a fresh interpretation of the character," Gray said, "but there is a much bigger world surrounding him than he knows. We don't want to give away too much too soon."

"I think what makes this stand out is its larger mystery. We live in the 21st century. If the government wanted to know who you were, they could easily find out. The real question here is not being asked by the other characters it is being asked by the Unknown Soldier him self – 'Who am I?' We explore a lot of that angle when we're not leveling an ancient fortress in the desert with a Barrett M82A1 50 cal sniper rifle."

While the story begins in the Middle East, readers shouldn't expect it to remain rooted in this region. "Afghanistan is a launch point, but it isn't the primary setting," Gray said, "because the Unknown Soldier, with some science fiction elements in play, finds he's much more effective in combatting threats to national security outside the theater of war. The first storyline deals with a direct threat to American soil."

"The set pieces are realistic, as are the situations he is in, but with other elements more fantastic making their way into the storyline, we will be taking the character on a journey we haven't seen before," Palmiotti said.

From the description of the series, it sounds as if the Unknown Soldier is on a quest for superpowers. Why? What does he hope to do when and if he gets them? "He's not on a quest for superpower," Gray corrected. "He's looking for revenge and redemption—and in the process, he catches the eye of a special government program who see him as a valuable asset."

They're also not telling him the full truth." Will this superhero angle lead to any New 52 guest stars or superhero links? "We're staying away from interaction with superheroes," Gray said, "because 'Unknown Soldier' needs to stand on his own as a character and a genre. Once you go down that road with a character like this, I think you lose what makes him special. There's action, adventure and a ton of plot twists in such a small amount of time that we don't feel the pressure to put a heavy emphasis on anything other than Unknown Soldier."

"If the series were a true ongoing with room to explore the DCU, we would love to take that on like we did with *Jonah Hex*," Palmiotti explained, "but for now, we are focusing on the world around the character, the world his story is set in, and we hope the future might present us with different challenges for the character if it continues."

Like J.T. Krul, Palmiotti and Gray are hopeful that this the beginning of a long tour of duty for the Unknown Soldier. "We want to hook the reader quickly," present the situation at hand, turn the dial all the way up, and make this the best story we can given the space we have to tell it," Palmiotti said. "What the future holds is up to the readers."

"That's out job," Gray said in closing. "To deliver the best and most entertaining stories we can, fourteen pages at a time!"

G.I. Combat #1, a \$3.99 comic that introduces the new "War That Time Forgot" and "Unknown Soldier," is in stores now; *G.I. Combat* #2 follows on June 6th.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!





She's a Lady

Many current readers may be unfamiliar with the Freedom Fighters, but the folks at DC obviously still have a lot of love for this superteam comprised of old Quality heroes. One member of the Freedom Fighters, The Ray, debuted in his own limited series in late 2011—and later this year, a second high-profile member, Phantom Lady, will make her own miniseries premiere.

Phantom Lady, written by Justin Gray & Jimmy Palmiotti and illustrated by Cat Staggs & Rich Perotta, will be joined by another Quality hero, the diminutive Doll Man. "Phantom Lady and Doll Man is an exciting return to the roots of the characters as pulpy, street level crime fighters with a few new twists and some heavy sci-fi overtones," Justin Gray said on DC's blog *The Source*. "We took the best of their original core concepts and updated them with no relation to our previous work on Phantom Lady and Doll Man in the Freedom Fighters. You're getting in on the ground floor of the origin story of two people whose lives intersect and a common threat that transforms them into pretty amazing and engaging superheroes."

"We are super excited to reconnect with characters we have been so close with over the years, and getting to create something both exciting and visually cool in the process," Jimmy Palmiotti added. "With this series, we dig into who Phantom Lady and Doll Man are, how they came to be and how they fit into DC Comics—The New 52. There is something for everyone here and we are having a blast!"

COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

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"I have to say I am really enjoying what Jimmy and Justin have created," said Cat Staggs. "It is a wonderful take on a classic character. The story itself leans towards a gritty crime noir, which is something I am a huge fan of. Getting to draw this on a daily basis is a dream! I can't wait for fans to see it!"

"One of the first comic books I ever read as a child was *Freedom Fighters*," added Rich Perotta. "I am very excited to be a part of this latest project from DC Comics."

Phantom Lady #1 is slated for August 29th release.

Extermination—A Killer Series

Comics are filled with arch-enemies—it's a tradition in the superhero genre that every hero has to have a villain to serve as his nemesis. But what if a greater evil arose, a challenge so devastating that the heroes and the villains had to put their differences aside in order to pursue a common goal?

That's the premise of *Extermination*, a new series by Simon Spurrier & Jeffrey Edwards. In the wake of an apocalyptic alien invasion, the world's greatest super-heroes and deadliest super-villains must form an alliance to prevent their own extermination. Two arch-enemies—Nox, a driven hero, and Red Reaper, a ruthless villain—form a volatile partnership for the greater good. But will they be able to ultimately put aside their bitter past to prevent global genocide?

Boom Studios is getting behind this series launch in a major way: not only is the first issue priced at only \$1 to make it affordable for every reader, but the publisher is also adding a number of variant covers, including a CGC certified 9.8 variant sketch cover featuring art by John Cassaday.

"I love the premise of this post-apocalyptic series," Boom Founder and Chief Executive Officer Ross Richie said. "At \$1 for the first full issue and with this exciting cover line-up and a killer creative team, this book is ready to catch on fire."



"Si Spurrier is a massive talent," Boom Editor-in-Chief Matt Gagnon added. "With *Extermination*, he's boldly exploring the dark crevices of the entire superhero genre. Not to be missed!"

Extermination #1, a June release by Spurrier and Edwards, will feature cover art by John Cassaday, Trevor Hairsine, Michael Gaydos, James Harren, and Frazer Irving. There will also be sketch variants by James Harren and Trevor Hairsine sketch covers, as well as the aforementioned John Cassaday 1:100 CGC certified 9.8 sketch variant.

Summer's the Time for Annuals!

...And DC has a number of them on the August schedule. Readers can look forward to:

• *The Flash Annual #1*, by Francis Manapul & Brian Buccellato. "One by one, the Flash's rogues have been returning to the pages of *The Flash*—along with some new faces, like the mysterious Turbine," Editor Matt Idelson said. "The reunited Rogues hate the Flash

just as much as they

always have (if not more) — but this time, they're gunning for Captain Cold, too! It's all-out mayhem, everybody vs. everybody, with an even bigger and nastier threat preparing to swing into the fray at exactly the wrong time...

• *Detective Comics Annual #1*, by Tony S. Daniel, Romano Molenaar, & Sandu Florea. "This special Annual pits the Dark Knight against the Black Mask—a Gotham City villain most recently seen during the Night of the Owls!" *Batman* group editor Mike Marts said.



• *Green Lantern Annual #1*, by Geoff Johns & Ethan Van Sciver. "Working with Ethan means things change, things are revealed and new characters rise," Johns said. "It's the madness of our collaborations that started all this and will continue it. The universe is a dangerous place. And it's about to get even more so..."

"*Green Lantern Annual #1* not only brings the Black Hand story to a truly unexpected close, but sets up the major events that will heavily impact the entire Green Lantern franchise in a truly devastating way," editor Matt Idelson added. "And

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER

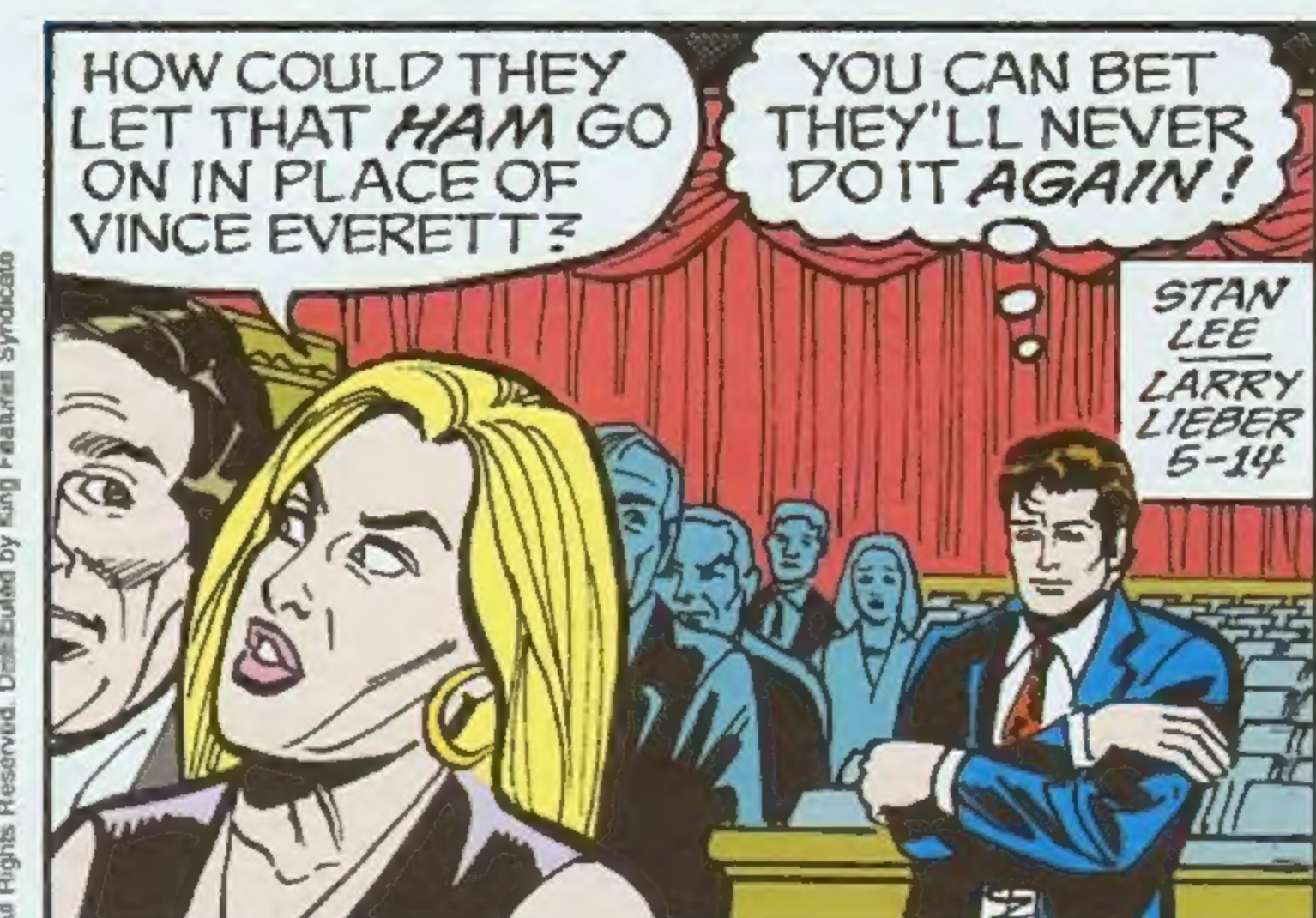
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SPIDER-MAN



there's no more appropriate pairing for this book than reuniting Geoff Johns with Ethan Van Sciver, given the Green Lantern history those two have under their belts."



• **Justice League International Annual #1**, by Dan DiDio, Geoff Johns, & Jason Fabok. "This is the final fate of this incarnation of the Justice League International," DiDio said. "There will be also be a big showdown of events that played out in the final issues of O.M.A.C. The ramifications of this will be felt across the board and will lead directly into a major event spanning across all the Justice League group titles later this year."



• **Superman Annual #1**, written by Keith Giffen. "Ever wonder what's out there beyond the farthest known reaches of the DC Universe?" Giffen asked "Superman's about to get the answer to that - in spades - as we introduce an entirely new cosmic realm and drop him into the middle of it. The DC Universe's cosmic presence is about to be dramatically expanded and it all starts with ... a game show?"

CSNsider

• Kid Flash, part of *Teen Titans* since the series' New 52 relaunch, gets his own solo adventure in August's *DC Universe Presents #12*. The standalone story will follow Kid Flash as he deals with the prehistoric trouble the Teen Titans brought back from Mystery Island. "The Teen Titans survived the Culling and are in for some prehistoric

Comic Shop News



adventures in both *Superboy* and *Teen Titans* number tens on the aptly named Mystery Island. And when all is said and done, they will be taking home some souvenirs," editor Eddie Berganza said on DC's *The Source*. "Helping Kid Flash have a yabba-doo time with the visiting Dino teens (in back-ups in both *Teen Titans* #s 11 & 12 with a prologue and epilogue that connects to *DC Presents* #12) are writer Fabian Nicieza and artist Jorge Jimenez. As this story unfolds, we will see which species is really set for extinction!"

• **Maurice Sendak**, illustrator and children's book author best known for *Where The Wild Things Are*, died on May 8th at the age of 83 due to complication from a stroke. While he worked primarily in illustrated prose, he did some comics work as well.

• **Arrow**, a television series focusing on Green Arrow, has been picked up by The CW network. The series, produced by Greg

Berlanti & Mark Guggenheim, will star Stephen Amell as Oliver Queen (alas, not Justin Hartley, who played the character in *Smallville*), Katie Cassidy as Dinah Lance/Black Canary, and Willa Holland as Thea Queen.



• **Cullen Bunn** is taking over as writer of *Venom* with #23; he has recently co-written the book with Rick Remender.

• Veteran comics illustrator **Tony DeZuniga**, co-creator of *Jonah Hex*, died on May 9th at the age of 79 as the result of a stroke, heart failure, and brain damage, after weeks in hospital. DeZuniga was one of the first Philippine artists to find major success in the American

TONY DEZUNIGA



market after he was hired by editor Joe Orlando to work on DC's horror-suspense books. While he is best known for his work at DC, where he illustrated *Jonah Hex*, *Arak*, *The Phantom Stranger*, and other features, he also worked for Marvel for years, most notably on *The Savage Sword of Conan*.

Back to Press

- **Avengers Assemble 2nd Printing** (MAR128289), featuring a variant cover by Mark Bagley, in stores 6/13.
- **Avengers Vs. X-Men #0 4th Printing** (MAR128287), featuring a variant cover by Frank Cho, in stores 6/13.
- **Hell Yeah #3 2nd Printing** (MAR128275), in stores 6/6.
- **Justice League #1 8th Printing** (MAR128285), featuring a recolored version of the original cover, in stores 6/6.
- **Shadow #1 2nd Printing** (MAR128302), in stores 6/6.



IT'S NOT THE END OF THE W



MINUTEMEN
Darwyn Cooke



SILK SPECTRE
Darwyn Cooke/Amanda Conner



COMEDIAN
Brian Azzarello/J.G. Jones



NITE OWL
J. Michael Straczynski/
Andy Kubert and Joe Kubert

BEFORE



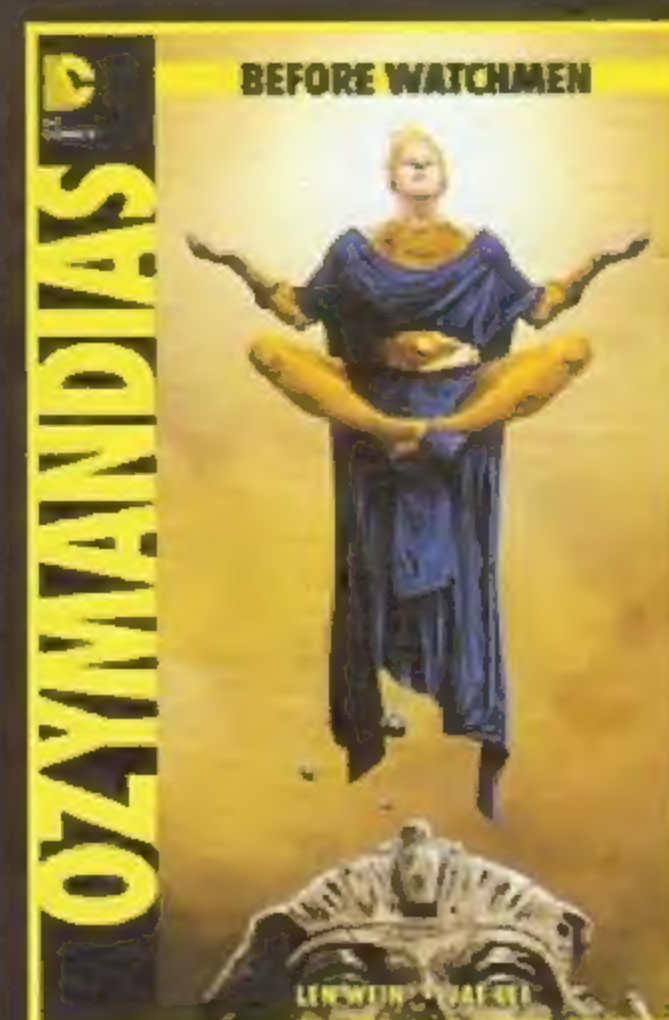
7 LIMITED SERIES WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY



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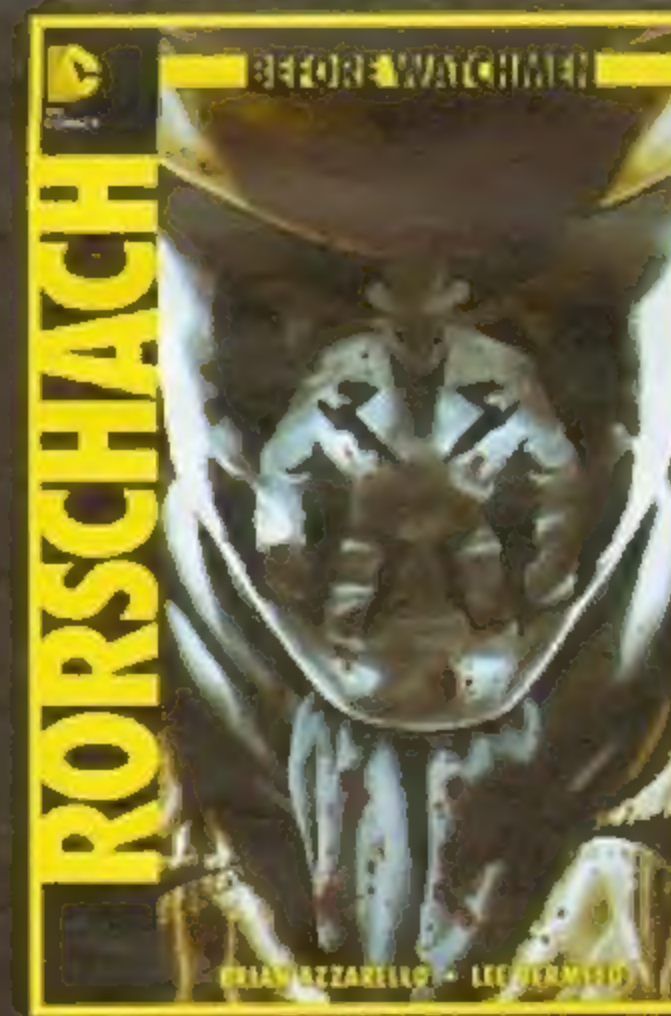
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OZYMANDIAS
Len Wein/Jae Lee



DR. MANHATTAN
J. Michael Straczynski/Adam Hughes



RORSCHACH
Brian Azzarello/Lee Bermejo

Each issue includes
a part of the
**CURSE OF THE
CRIMSON CORSAIR**

serial by
Len Wein
and
John Higgins



COMICS' TOP TALENTS • IT BEGINS JUNE 2012

•**Silver Surfer: Rebirth of Thanos TP** (MAR128290), in stores 6/20.
 •**Supreme #64 2nd Printing** (MAR128276), in stores 6/6.

Coming Comics— Dynamite in August

In Garth Ennis & Russ Braun's *The Boys* #69, Hughie follows a shocking trail straight to the home of an old adversary thought long dead in part four of "The Bloody Doors Off"—and it's only three issues away from the climactic end of Ennis's long-running series!

Barnabas and Vampirella, in the same book? That's just what readers will find in *Dark Shadows/Vampirella* #1 by Marc Andreyko & Patrick Berkenkotter. When the disappearance of a family friend brings Barnabas Collins to New York, he is ill-prepared for the seedy underworld of clubs that awaits him! And Vampirella's quest to find the "big apple butcher" sends her on a collision course with the vampire of Collinsport! Will Vampirella and Barnabas uncover the shocking identity of this madman before they kill one another?

Dynamite offers another oversized heaping helping of Ryan Sohmer's *The Gutters in The Gutters Absolute Complete Omnibus Volume 2 HC*, collecting more than a hundred scathing, sarcastic, silly, and surprising looks at the comic book industry.



Paizo Publishing's popular *Pathfinder* role-playing game comes to comics this summer, courtesy of writer Jim Zubkavich and artist Andrew Huerta. *Pathfinder* #1 focuses on the warrior Valeros, the beautiful sorceress Seoni, and the rogue Merisiel, pitting them against the goblin tribes of Varisia in a grand fantasy adventure filled with all the classic elements that have made *Pathfinder* a big RPG hit.

The sorcerer Kulan Gath uses the Mayan 2012 doomsday prophecy to push the world closer to destruction in *Prophecy* #3 by Ron Marz & Walter Geovani. But his sworn enemy Red Sonja followed him through time itself, and has now gathered a team of allies—



Vampirella, Dracula, Pantha, Herbert West Reanimator, and others—to oppose Gath and his army of the dead.

Thulsa Doom struggles to return home in *Red Sonja: Atlantis Rises* #1 by Luke Lieberman & Max Dunbar. Or more specifically, he wants to bring his sunken home back to the surface and restore Atlantis to its former glory as the most powerful nation in the world...

The Shadow and his allies find themselves alone in the wilderness with little hope of rescue in Garth Ennis & Aaron Campbell's *Shadow* #5. Deep in the kingdom of Buffalo Wong the object of everyone's desire is revealed, and Margo Lane and Pat Finnegan begin to see just how far Lamont Cranston will go in pursuit of his goals.

When a military helicopter crashes in a remote African valley, only one man survives. However, almost all of his memories were lost in the crash. All that he

knows is that his name is Roger Drum and that he's skilled in combat. And he's going to need those skills as he discovers that his jungle home is also host to dinosaurs and other strange creatures in *Thund'a* #1 by Robert Place Napton & Cliff Richards.

Writer Brandon Jerwa continues the dramatic "Inquisition" in *Vampirella* #22. There is a revolution brewing in the depths of Vatican City, and Vampirella is caught in the crossfire! Who do you side with when you can't trust anyone?

Dynamite collected editions include:

- The Expendables TP**, collecting the movie prequel.
- Kirby: Genesis Volume 1 TP**, collecting *Kirby: Genesis* #s 0-8.
- Queen Sonja Volume 4: Son of Set TP**, collecting *Queen Sonja* #s 16-20 along with variant cover images.
- Vampirella Vs. Dracula TP**, collecting the six-part miniseries along with all of the

covers by Joseph Michael Linsner.

•**Voltron Volume 1: The Sixth Pilot TP**, collecting *Voltron* #s 1-6.

Coming Comics— Dark Horse in August

The expedition to Quor-Toth has taken an unplanned turn for Angel, Faith, Willow, and Connor as they try to stage a great escape in *Angel & Faith* #13 by Christos Gage & Rebekah Isaacs.

Evan Dorkin & Jill Thompson revisit the world of *Beasts of Burden* in the oneshot *Beasts of Burden: Neighborhood Watch*, a oneshot collection of the serial that appeared in *Dark Horse Presents*.

Buffy's new job working for Deepscan—the company that recruits Slayers as bodyguards—forces her to call on the honorable Eldre Koh for help in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season 9* #12 by Andrew Chambliss, Georges Jeanty, & Nathan Massengill.



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STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
5-17

SPIKE 1



Having fought to regain his soul after falling in love with the Slayer Buffy, the once-terrifying vampire villain Spike is forced to examine the man he once was, the man he is now, and the man he still hopes to become in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Spike #1*.

Falsely accused of heaven's first homicide, five churlish cherubim, assisted by an exotic dancer, escape to New York in pursuit of the renegade archangel Abaddon on the eve of the Apocalypse in *Bryan Talbot & Mark Stafford's Cherub HC*, a 192-page original graphic novel.

Rod Espinoza offers a gender-twisting version of the Charles Dickens classic in *A Christmas Carol: The Night That Changed the Life of Eliza Scrooge*, an original hard-cover graphic novel.

Artist Becky Cloonan reunites with Brian Wood for *Conan the Barbarian #7*, which takes Conan and Belit to the frozen North in pursuit of an impostor committing atrocities in Conan's name.

A detective afflicted with acromegaly—a physical deformity resulting in brutish facial features at mid-life—is hired by the mother of a dad boy to find out why (or if) he committed suicide in *The Creep #0* by John Arcudi & Jonathan Case.

Arvid Nelson's critically acclaimed Rex Mundi returns in *Dark Horse Presents #15*; this issue also includes a new chapter of Neal Adams' *Blood*, Mike Baron & Steve Rude's *Nexus*, and more.

Artist Yoshitaka Amano makes his writing debut with *Deva Zan*, a 300-page illustrated novel starring a samurai without a memory.

Dragon Age II lead writer David Gaider pens the three-issue miniseries *Dragon Age: Those Who Speak*.

Falling Age returns to television this summer—but before then, it's returning to comic shops in *Falling Skies Volume 2 TP* by Paul Tobin, Mark Verheiden, Danilo Beyruth, Juan Ferreyra, & Patrick Reynolds. With the Second Mass pinned down by alien forces and an army of skitter closing in, the group shields themselves in an armory in Fitchburg, ready to finish the battle once and for all.

The Goon goes monthly beginning this August—and to make it a truly special event, writer/artist Eric Powell has enlisted guest illustrator Mark Buckingham to supply the art for a special black-and-white backup story.

The Heliopic Brotherhood of Ra hold a Victorian themed party complete with the unrolling of a mummy, with decidedly unexpected results, in *Lobster Johnson: The Prayer of Neferu* by Mike Mignola, John Arcudi, & Wilfredo Torres.

In a remote village in the Aleutian Islands, the crew of the *Kapital*, on the run from Siberian pirates, reconsiders their core mission as pacifists and conservationists in *The Massive #3* by Brian Wood & Kristian Donaldson. In this unpredictable and often violent world, should they be more? N



Michael Avon Oeming introduces six heroes sworn to protect humanity from crime, corruption, and the dark in *Michael Avon Oeming's The Victories #1*. As one member cracks down on the violence, he discovers himself touched by a painful past through the psychic powers of Link. Will this trauma cause him to self-destruct or continue the fight?



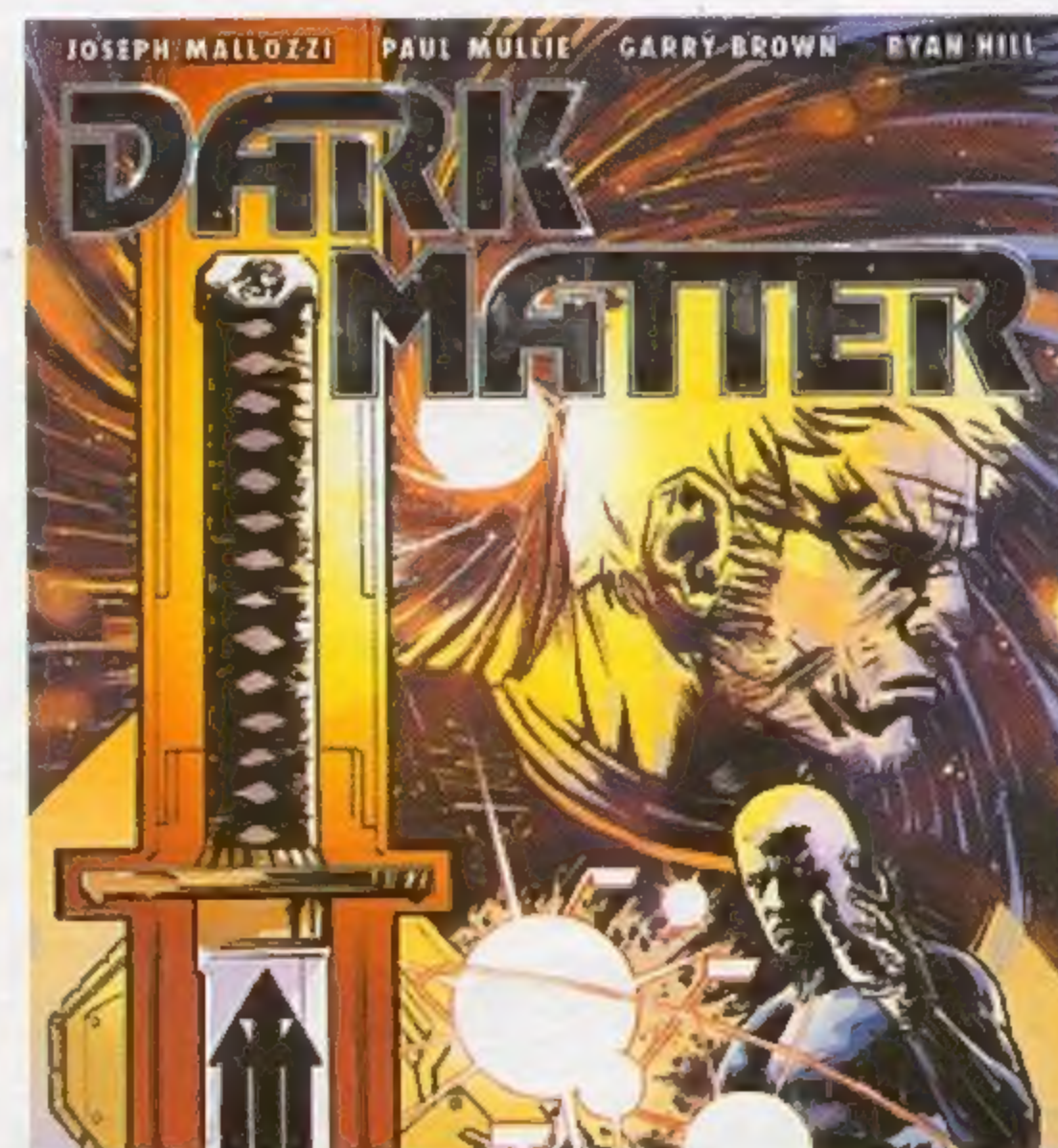
Farel Dalrymple, Ryan Ottley, Khoi Pham, and others present imaginative retellings of familiar tales in *Once Upon a Time Machine*, a 432-page original anthology.

On a planet ruled by a tribe of Sith—marooned thousands of years ago and cut off from the galaxy—the throne holder is about to be challenged by a power-hungry Sith rebel from the slums and a thwarted royal Sith princess in *Star Wars: Lost*

Tribe of the Sith #1 by John Jackson Miller, Andrea Mutti, & Pierluigi Baldassini.

Dark Horse collected editions (advance solicited for September and October release) include:

- *Creepy Archives Volume 14 HC*, collecting *Creepy* #s 64-68.



- *Dark Matter Volume 1: Rebirth TP*, collecting the four-issue miniseries.

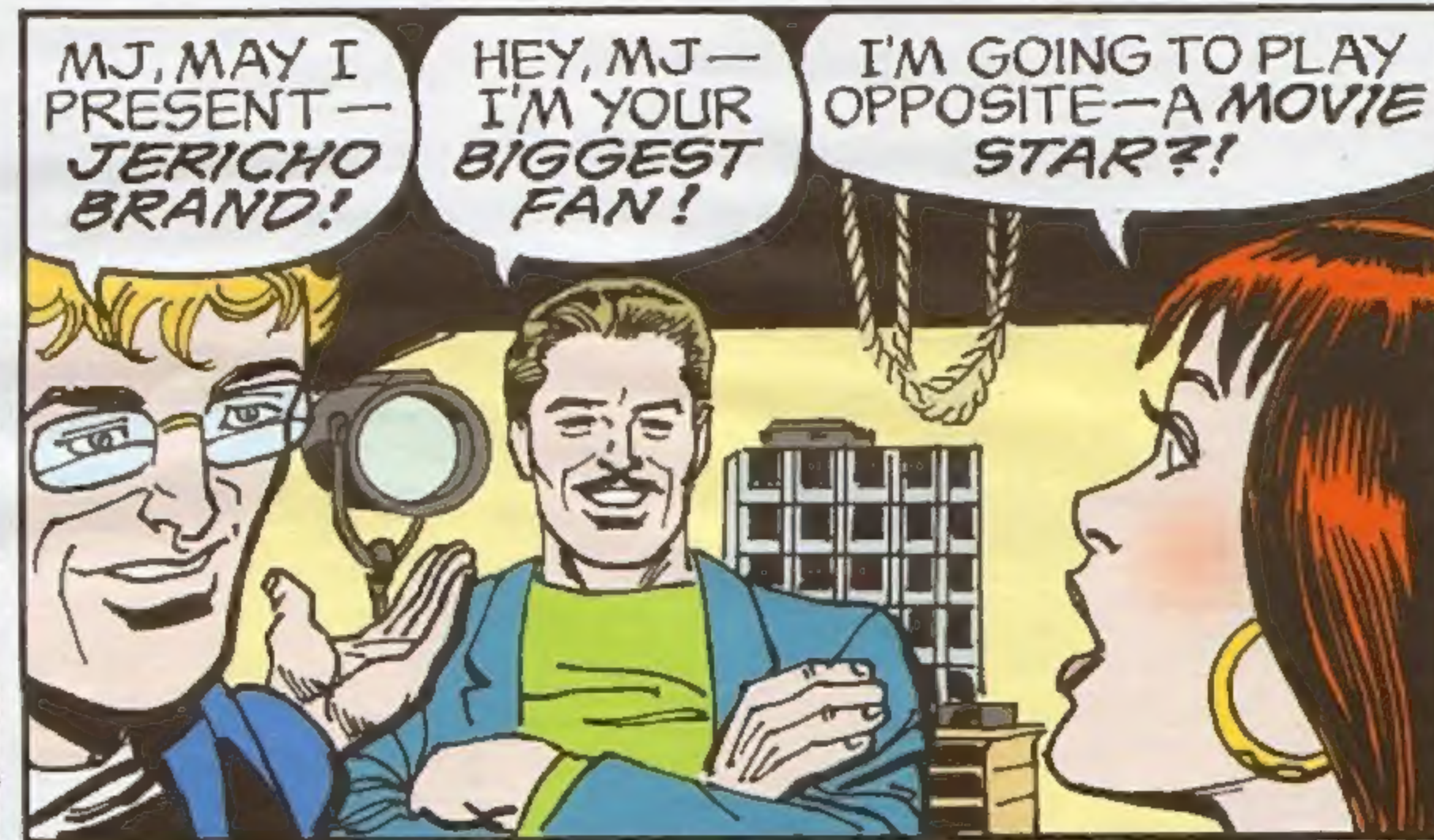
- *Fear Agent Volume 1 HC*, collecting *Fear Agent* #s 1-15 along with half of the *Tales of the Fear Agent* side stories and more.

- *Finder: Talisman HC*, collecting the fan-favorite series by Carla Speed McNeil.

- *Star Wars: Agent of the Empire Volume 1—Iron Eclipse TP*, collecting the five-issue story arc.

- *Star Wars Omnibus: Clone Wars Volume 2—The Enemy on All Sides TP*, collecting *Star Wars: Republic* #s 54-66 & 68, *Star Wars: Jedi—Yoda*, and *Star Wars: General Grievous* #s 1-4.

Dark Horse's *Marvel Classic Character Series* continues with *Captain America*, a syroco style statue limited to 750 copies.



Follow Spider-Man every week in Comic Shop News!

CHINA MIÉVILLE MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

DIAL

#1



THE
SECOND WAVE
BEGINS IN MAY 2012



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COMICS™

THE NEW 52!

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